

ABSTRACT

Methods and apparatus for documentation, analysis, auditing, accounting, protection, registration, and verification of trade secrets are disclosed. Information relating to a trade secret, including the trade secret's identification, description, keywords, source, creation date, creation location, value, depreciation method, threat of theft, measures for protection, patentability, estimated life expectancy, the type of trade secret, combination analysis, and data associated with the six factors of a trade secret as set forth in Section 757 of the First Restatement of Torts, is entered into the computer system. Additional information concerning the management of the trade secret, including legal reviewer, legal review date, legal review schedule, business reviewer, business review date, business review schedule, validity status, source status, and licensing status, is entered into the computer system. Further information concerning the company, such as company locations, company groups, departments, and divisions and their hierarchical relationships, and further information concerning the employees, including locations employed, and group, department, and division employed, is also entered into the computer system. The computer system archives and timestamps the data entered. The system performs analysis of the data, producing graphs and reports for the purposes of documentation, analysis, auditing, accounting, and protection of the trade secrets. These analyses include analyses of the values of trade secrets, the ranking of trade secrets, the adequacy of security measures, the exposure of employees to trade secrets, and other analyses relevant to the protection of trade secret assets. The computer system registers the trade secret with a computer system operated by a trusted third-party through the use of unique identification codes. The third-party computer system records the existence of the trade secret and the associated unique identification codes without receiving any decodable trade secret information. The third-party computer system issues a trade secret

certificate, which can be used by the trade secret originating company and other firms to verify the existence, ownership, and registration date of the trade secret. The unique identification codes maintained by the trusted third-party can be used to verify the trade secret data at a later date.